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REMARKS

Upon entry of this amendment, four claims (1-2 and 4-5) will remain pending.

The examiner has rejected claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) on grounds of obviousness. Claims 1-2 and 4-5 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Sicard in view of Hansen. Claim 3, now cancelled, has been rejected over Sicard in view of Hansen as applied to claims 1-2 and 4-5, and further in view of Katsen. This is now moot.

Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be reconsidered in view of the foregoing Amendment and the Remarks set forth herein. Applicant submits that the amended claims contain no additional matter not present in applicant's original application.

Independent claims 1 and 5 have been amended to include the following additional limitation:

said opposed end caps include flexible, integral gasket means adapted to engage fittings of more than one size.

The cited primary Sicard patent is inapposite to the claimed apparatus. It does not have nor does it suggest usage of a skeletal core member; most importantly it does not have the flexible, integral gasket means recited in subparagraph (e) of claim 1.

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The secondary Hansen patent has no gasket means whatever. It utilizes a threaded connection. Moreover, the chemicals for treatment are entirely separate and cannot be readily replenished as in the applicants' apparatus through the open end cap.

The deficiencies of these references are not overcome by the Kasten patent for an air filter (not a swimming pool filter).

The aforementioned matter was previously set forth in claim 3 and supported by applicant's original specification at p. 6, ll. 1-3 (¶ 1) and p. 7, ll. 7-13 (¶ 2), the flexible gaskets (or flanges) being neither disclosed nor suggested by the secondary reference issued to Kasten, which was relied upon by the examiner in an effort to meet the integral gasket means limitation of claims 1 and 5 (previously recited in now cancelled claim 3).

As most clearly depicted in Figs. 1, 5 and 6 at numerals 53, 54 and 153, 154, the integral flexible gaskets (flanges) of applicant's filter are bendable, as necessary, in a direction towards the skeletal core upon forcible contact with the outer periphery of a fitting, whereby the diameter of the end cap opening is increased (or reduced upon removal). Thus, the flexible gasket means of the invention permits engagement of fittings of a series of outer diameters through end caps (51, 52 and 151, 152), whereby one cartridge filter can accommodate a variety of differently sized cylindrical fittings. Unlike prior art filter gasket means (including that of Katsen, as explained below), the filter construction depicted and described in the subject application is designed to fit more than one diameter fitting or filter port, allowing dealers to reduce filter inventory and enable consumers to more easily find a suitably sized cartridge filter. Annexed

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hereto are three sheets of drawings depicting how the flange accommodates six different size fittings.

In contrast to the improved flexible gasket construction of the present invention, Kasten teaches an air filter comprising a pair of "plastic endcaps 16 and 18 which are molded about the ends of the pleated member 12 and the wrapper 14." The construction and function of the end caps as disclosed by Kasten is that of conventional sealing members, i.e., to provide an air-tight seal at the ends. As recited in col. 2, ll. 55-60 of Katsen when describing the endcap construction, "the purpose of the ridge...is to space the end of the pleated member 12 from the bottom of the mold so that the pleated member will have properly sealed ends." Kasten fails to disclose a flexible, i.e., movable, gasket means adapted to accommodate the fittings of a plurality of sizes as set forth in claims 1 and 5 as amended.

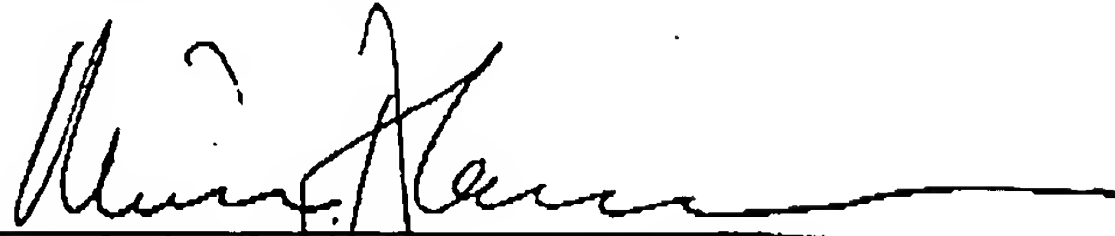
Because neither Katsen nor any reference of record teaches or suggests each limitation of applicant's filter as claimed, it is requested that the rejection of claims 1 (and depending claims 2 and 4) and 5 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, the specific claims as now set forth are believed to be patentable and, therefore, withdrawal of the rejections and passage to allowance is in order. An early notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being telefaxed to GAU 1724, Examiner Fred G. Prince, at the United States Patent Office, 703-872-9306, on April 22, 2005.


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